POOL OF INTERNATIONAL EXPERTS ON SAFE SPORT

"Start to Talk" project

Terms of Reference

The Pool of International Experts on Safe Sport (the "Pool of Experts" or the "Pool") is a unique group of multidisciplinary experts covering all forms of violence and abuse against children in sport. It brings together policy makers, researchers and academics, specialists supporting people with lived experience, (child) safeguarding officers, trainers/consultants and agents of change.

The Pool of International Experts on Safe Sport was established within the context of the European Union-Council of Europe joint project "Child Safeguarding in Sport" (CSiS). Since the end of the CSiS project in June 2022, the secretariat support for the Pool has been provided by Start to Talk, a project of the Council of Europe's Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS) that aims to safeguard children in sport. The Pool of International Experts on Safe Sport provides opportunities for peer-learning, capacity building and fostering exchanges between those who have a role to play in combating and preventing violence against children in field of sport.

The maximum capacity of the Pool is 40 members. The Pool will be updated every three years. Those members who wish to continue to take part in the Pool must apply for membership and submit their latest information.

For further information, please consult the Mandate of the Pool of International Experts on Safe Sport.

In view of the abovementioned, the Start to Talk Secretariat is launching a call for applications to join the Pool of International Experts on Safe Sport.

Call for applications

This call for applications is launched to invite interested and qualified candidates to submit their application to become a member of the Pool of International Experts on Safe Sport. The aim of this call is to renew the Pool; both the current members of the Pool and new candidates are welcome to apply.

In the following pages you will find the terms of reference.

All applications will be assessed on the basis of expertise and experience and those in line with the Pool requirements will be selected up to a maximum of 40 members. Successful and unsuccessful candidates will be notified by the Secretariat. The profiles of those experts who have been selected will be published on the Start to Talk webpage.

Applications are to be submitted via the application form by **Sunday 13 December 2026 (23:59 CET)** either in English or French. Any applications received by email will not be included in the assessment.

Members

The Pool of International Experts on Safe Sport brings together seven categories of experts:

- Policy makers, responsible for the development of safeguarding policies and strategies in public authorities responsible for sport or sports organisations, at both national and international level.
- Trainers/Consultants, providing any kind of support on safeguarding in sport, including educational/training resources and activities.
- Researchers/Academics, with an expertise in safeguarding in sport.
- Specialists in supporting adults and/or children with lived experience of violence in sport, including harassment and abuse (legal, psychological support, etc.).
- (Child) Safeguarding Officers, appointed by a sport organisation or public authority to work on preventing and/or responding to all forms of violence in sport, including against children and young people.
- Mental health specialists, with an expertise in safeguarding in sport.
- Agents of organisational change, including sports professionals, and advocates within the world of sport, who actively contribute to improving safeguarding measures in their organisations, communities and in sport more broadly and raising awareness about the issue.

Members of the Pool of Experts shall have expertise and/or a minimum of 6 years of experience in the field of safeguarding in sport.

The Start to Talk Secretariat welcomes applications from junior profiles. Young people aged 18 to 30 years old on the date of application and with a minimum of 3 years of experience in the field of safeguarding in sport are encouraged to apply to the Pool of Experts in order to enhance the youth perspective within the Pool's work.

The Start to Talk Secretariat will screen the applications and nominate the members. The Start to Talk Secretariat will ensure gender, geographical and perspective balance in the Pool.

Mandate

Members of the Pool of International Experts on Safe Sport are invited to contribute to the work of EPAS and the Council of Europe as a whole in the field of safe sport:

- Participate as speakers in relevant events, conferences, seminars etc. to share knowledge and experience on safe sport;
- Engage in the Pool of Experts meeting(s) and actively contribute to the development of topical issues and outputs;
- Provide advice and support to the EPAS Secretariat, member states and partner organisations when developing their strategies, projects or activities on safe sport;
- Disseminate information and expertise on safe sport.

The Council of Europe allows members to:

- Take part in the annual meeting, network, share their experience and learn from their peers;
- Increase the visibility of their profile and promote their work at European and international level;
- Participate in and be informed about the work of relevant services of the Council of Europe and of its partner organisations;
- Be invited to take part in restricted calls for tenders.

Membership

Experts are nominated in their personal capacity and cannot be replaced in the meetings and during other Pool activities.

Membership of the Pool of International Experts on Safe Sport is voluntary. Members are free to relinquish their membership at any point in time. The Pool will be regularly updated; its members will be asked to provide the most recent information.

Members of the Pool are expected to attend and actively contribute to the annual meetings, to the development of topical issues and outcomes as well as other activities.